



Rabies Control Act effective as of January 1, 2010

New rules for the Rabies Control Act went into effect on January 1, 2010. Under the new rules, all dogs and cats four months of age or older will be required to have a rabies vaccination given by a licensed veterinarian. Currently no age limit is specified for initial vaccinations. Regardless of the age of the animal at initial vaccination, a booster vaccination should be administered one year later to ensure immunity to the rabies virus. In other words, dogs and cats, regardless of age, must receive 2 rabies vaccinations approximately one year apart. After these initial "booster vaccinations", then the pet may continue receiving the rabies vaccination at 1 to 3 year intervals depending on the type of vaccine used. Both one- and three-year duration vaccines are available.

After the initial two vaccinations, if a veterinarian administers a one-year licensed rabies vaccine, the pet will need to be revaccinated one year later. If a three-year vaccine is chosen, then the pet will be required to be revaccinated three years later. Pet owners should ask their veterinarian if a one-year or three-year vaccine was used to vaccinate their animals.

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that affects the brain and nerves. Arkansans and their pets can get rabies from the bite or scratch of a rabid animal. They can also be infected by getting a rabid animal's saliva in the eyes, nose, mouth, or an open wound. All warm-blooded animals can get rabies. However, some animals are more likely to become infected than others. Animals that are a high risk for spreading rabies include: bats, skunks, foxes, coyotes, and raccoons.

Of the samples submitted to ADH Public Health Laboratory in 2009, 2 dogs, 9 bats, and 36 skunks were reported as testing positive for the rabies virus in Arkansas. Vaccinating dogs and cats against rabies not only protects pets, it also provides a barrier of protection between humans and wildlife.

Contact the Benton County Health Unit at (479) 271-1055 ext. 4 for a full list of clinics and participating veterinarians. If you live outside of Benton County, contact your local health department for information about the Rabies Clinic Week in your area.



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Pet Regulations & Pound Operations

Regulations

1. There is a leash law within the city limits and also in the unincorporated areas of the county. This means a pet must be under the control of the owner, on a leash or by command, but they may run free inside a fenced yard.
2. People who live within the city limits are required (MUST) register their dogs at City Hall. The city ordinance states: "All dogs over the age of three months shall be licensed yearly within the city." A tag will be issued which can be displayed on the animal. The cost for spayed females or neutered males is \$3.75, for unspayed females or unneutered male the cost is \$10. Keeping collars on your pet displaying the tags helps us to locate and contact the owner immediately, resulting in little or no time spent at the pound.
3. There is a pound fee of \$15 per day, per dog. The ordinance states: "After the expiration of six days after any dog has been impounded, the dog shall become property of the city dog pound to be disposed of at its discretion by death or by adoption."

Operations

Dogs that are kept past the ordinance time limit are adopted out when possible so they don't have to be destroyed. However, the current pound is not equipped for extended stays and we do not want to make the dog pound into a "shelter", but we do not see any need in making their short stay with us miserable.

Dog food is donated to the pound by Wal-Mart.

Donations

These are items the pound is in need of, in no particular order of need.

1. Blankets or rugs for the dogs to lie on.
2. Collars and leashes so that they can be walked.
3. Monetary donations are also being sought for future fenced in yard so that the dogs can take turns exercising. This will also be beneficial when a family comes to view a potential adoptive dog.

These items are not necessarily needed but could be used to keep the dogs with extended stays at the pound occupied.

1. Chew bones.

2. Dog treats.
3. Toys intended for dogs.

If you are interested in helping with a donation, helping to solve the fencing problem, or have any questions, contact Pennie Berry, Administrative Assistant, for the Gravette Police Department at 787-6948.



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